

HEALTH
8 DEC 1949
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W E A L D O F K E N T H E A L T H A R E A .

1942

P U B L I C H E A L T H R E P O R T

by

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

A. W. GAYE, B.A., M.B., B.C., D.P.H. (Cantab.)

WEALD OF KENT HEALTH AREA.To the WEALD of KENT HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have pleasure in presenting the third Annual Report for the Weald of Kent Health Area.

The Statutory Health Committee for the year was constituted as follows:-

Chairman.

E. E. Selmes, Esq., J.P. - Tenterden Rural District, <u>Tenterden Borough.</u>	<u>Maidstone Rural District.</u>
Mrs. Adams.	W. Day, Esq.,
Dr. T. Martin.	J. B. Leaver, Esq.,
	J. A. Raynham, Esq..

Cranbrook Rural District.

A. B. Burney, Esq.,
Mrs. Clayton-Jones;
Miss A. D. Hindle.

Tenterden Rural District.

C. H. Brown, Esq..

Clerk to the Committee - P. G. Banfield, Esq.,
Office - 5, East Hill, Tenterden.

The population of the area has declined from 44,759 to 41,437, the decrease being associated mainly with the continued return home of the evacuees.

Shortage of houses remains an acute problem. There appears to be an average of seven occupants to every two houses, which indicates that the distribution is by no means even, those larger houses - not occupied by the Military - having very few residents in them.

Births increased from 599 in 1941 to 637 in the current year, the corresponding birth rates being 13.28 and 15.31 respectively.

556 deaths were recorded in the year giving a death rate of 13.36, the figure for England and Wales being 11.6. There were no deaths in the area from puerperal causes.

There was a large epidemic of measles involving two of the Rural Districts, but it is satisfactory to note that there were no deaths from either measles or whooping cough. An outbreak of diphtheria occurred in a private billet among un-immunised children. Details are given in the body of the report.

Immunisation is now mostly done, by arrangements with the doctors, at their surgeries or at the Welfare Centres. Numbers coming forward are not now sufficient for sessions without causing delay in inoculating some of the children. The number of immunised children under five years of age increased by the end of the year to 1,324 giving an estimated percentage of 62; the figures for children of 5 to 15 were 3,800 and 71%.

There was a regrettable number of samples of milk reported unsatisfactory during the summer months. Difficulties of labour are no better.

New notifications of tuberculosis - 45 - show a slight increase on the average for the previous five years, but were less than in 1939.

As, under present circumstances, the report should be brief, the statistical tables have been further abridged. Additional figures are available if required.

At the end of the report will be found tables of sanitary defects investigated. I wish to convey thanks to the Sanitary Inspectors for assistance rendered to me at all times during the year.


I am, Sirs,

Yours obediently,

(Signed) A. W. GAYE.

Medical Officer of Health.

"Yellowbois",
Cranbrook,
Kent.



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STATISTICS.

	Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R.D.
<u>AREA</u> (acres)	8,946	41,315	34,708	38,379
<u>RATEABLE Value</u>	£23,858	£76,717	£90,422	£27,606
SUM represented by a 1d. rate	£97	£310.16.7d.	£369.4.10d.	£114.13.0d.
<u>NUMBER of INHABITED HOUSES</u> - (end of 1942) according to Rate book.	1,086	4,091	5,020	2,105
<u>VITAL STATISTICS:-</u>				
<u>Live Births.</u> (Male	29	109	110	47
Legitimate. (Female	22	113	136	37
(Total	51	222	246	84
Illegitimate Total	4	13	14	3
<u>Birth Rate</u> (per 1,000 estimated population	14.61	16.45	15.06	13.84
<u>Still Births</u>				
Legitimate	1	2	9	2
Illegitimate	nil	nil	nil	2
<u>Deaths</u> Male	22	96	121	49
Female	31	91	102	44
Total	53	187	223	93
<u>Death Rate</u> (per 1,000 estimated population)	14.08	13.09	12.91	14.79
<u>Total Infant Deaths</u>				
Legitimate	nil	7	10	4
Illegitimate	nil	nil	1	nil
<u>Death Rate of Infants</u>				
. All infants per 1,000 live births.	-	29.78	38.46	45.97
<u>Deaths from Cancer</u> (all ages)	10	23	31	18
<u>Deaths from Diarrhoea</u> (under 2 years)	nil	nil	1	nil

The estimated population is less in each of the four districts. The comparative figures for births are as follows:-

Live Births	Tenterden Borough		Cranbrook R.D.		Maidstone R.D.		Tenterden R.D.	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.
1938	41	11.1	168	12.7	261	16.6	82	12.9
1939	47	13.7	160	12.1	246	15.5	91	14.4
1940	47	11.2	180	9.2	261	12.5	101	13.7
1941	57	14.5	196	12.4	268	14.6	78	11.6
1942	55	14.6	235	16.4	260	15.1	87	13.8

In the Cranbrook R.D. there was a 19% increase in the births with a rise in the birth rate of 25%. There is also an increase in the Tenterden R.D. but not as great as in 1939.

The death rate increased in all districts. There was an increase in deaths from cancer in the Tenterden R.D.

The death rate of infants was decreased in the Cranbrook and Maidstone R.D. and increased in the Tenterden R.D. There were no infant deaths in the Tenterden Borough.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Tenterden Borough)	No change in any of the four districts.
Cranbrook R.D.)	
Maidstone R.D.)	
Tenterden R.D.)	

The following samples were taken:-

	Tenterden Borough		Cranbrook R.D.		Maidstone R.D.		Tenterden R.D.	
	Good	Bad	Good	Bad	Good	Bad	Good	Bad
MAINS	6	-	14	-	13	-	58	5
WELLS	-	-	5	17	2	1	2	66

In addition 27 samples were taken from wells for chemical examination in the Maidstone Rural District, 17 of which were unsatisfactory. Most of the sampling of well water was with a view to emergency supplies. It will be seen that they are nearly all unsuitable for drinking purposes unless boiled or chlorinated.

Frequent routine samples were taken by the Water Companies and found satisfactory.

The raw water from the source at Ewell Manor, East Farleigh does not appear at all times satisfactory, though the water after efficient chlorination and as supplied to the public has been good.

Maidstone R.D. - a visit was paid to the water sources and plant of the Maidstone District Water Company by courtesy of the Company and the Medical Officer of Health for Maidstone Borough and Hollingbourne Rural District.

DRAINAGE, SEWERAGE, AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.

There were no changes in the area. In the Cranbrook Rural District collections for salvage purposes were extended to Benenden and Frittenden.

HOUSING.

Tenterden Borough. There is a long waiting list of applicants for Council Houses.

Cranbrook R.D. Owing to lack of men and material, it has only been found possible to deal with urgent repairs.

Maidstone R.D. There is a great demand for new houses. There is much overcrowding. The condition of the houses throughout the district is gradually deteriorating.

Tenterden R.D. Generally housing conditions are satisfactory. Some difficulty is being experienced in enforcing repairs, owing to shortage of labour and materials. There is a long waiting list for Council houses.

MILK SUPPLIES.

The following table shows the samples examined:-

	Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R.D.
	No. Bad.	No. Bad.	No. Bad.	No. Bad.
Schools	6 * -	25 4	9 -	8 -
Ordinary	- -	3 -	- -	- -
Designated	10 1	93 19	34 6	50 15
For Tuberculosis	4 -	8 1	10 1	12 2

In the Cranbrook district, sampling was held up in the September quarter owing to foot and mouth disease.

* The schools reported the milk unsatisfactory on several occasions in the summer.

The unsatisfactory samples almost all occurred in the warmer months of the year.

Considerably more supervision of milk production and retailing is needed, but there are many calls upon the Sanitary Inspectors' time for other duties under present circumstances.

Maidstone R.D. - The Sanitary Inspector reports much of the milk unsatisfactory. A better class of person is required in the milking, and in handling of milk.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

- Tenterden Borough - slaughtering suspended.
Cranbrook R.D. - all slaughtering now carried out at Tunbridge Wells.
Maidstone R.D. - the slaughter-houses are only occasionally used for killing under permits from the Food Executive Officer.
Tenterden R.D. - meat for the district is killed at Government slaughter-houses. On only one occasion during the year was it necessary to condemn meat at a butcher's shop.

NURSING HOMES.

	Number Registered	Maternity Beds.	Other Beds
Tenterden Borough	1	Up to 15	25 (20 Emergency)
Cranbrook R.D.	7	14	49
Maidstone R.D.	3 *	30	5
Total	11	59	79

* One of these - Park House, Marden, was removed from the Register during the year, following conviction of the owner of felony at the instance of the Police.

Periodic visits were paid to the Nursing Homes during the year and conditions found satisfactory.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

<u>Disease.</u>	Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R.D.
Diphtheria	-	27	6	4
Scarlet Fever	4	16	11	1
Pneumonia	-	23	25	8
Cerebro-spinal fever	-	-	3	-
Erysipelas	-	6	6	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	2	5	-
Measles	-	277	357	6
Whooping Cough	-	18	54	-
Acute anterior poliomyelitis	-	1	-	-
Dysentery (Sonne)	-	1	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-	-	1	-
Totals	4	371	468	20

There were 3 deaths from diphtheria, 4 from pneumonia, 2 from cerebro-spinal fever and 1 from erysipelas.

The Military notified 2 cases of diphtheria, 10 of pneumonia, 3 of chicken pox and 1 of mumps.

There was a big epidemic of measles early in the year in the Maidstone R.D. followed by one in the Cranbrook R.D. as it spread to adjacent parishes. There was some increase of cases in the Maidstone R.D. in August and September with the advent of hop-pickers.

An outbreak of diphtheria occurred at a private billet in the Cranbrook R.D. The son of the house aged 15 died after removal elsewhere to Hospital, but the disease was not diagnosed before death. The daughter age 17, was said to have had a sore throat, but swabs from her throat and nose were consistently negative. Nevertheless she developed cardiac symptoms six weeks later.

15 visits were paid to the billet and all the occupants and helpers repeatedly examined - 316 swabs being taken. In all 21

INFECTIOUS DISEASE - continued.

children were admitted to hospital, 9 of whom proved to be clinical cases. Many of them on admission were in a shocking state, ten of them having verminous heads, and some impetiginous sores. Two of them developed chicken pox soon after admission, one infective jaundice and 5 measles. The outbreak was probably started by the admission to the billet of a child with an unhealed mastoid wound in which the Klebs Loeffler bacillus was found on examination bacteriologically. One boy died in hospital and several others had severe attacks. The onset of cardiac symptoms and palatal paralysis was often delayed till six weeks from the start of illness and came on even in some of the mild cases. The organism was shown to be of the Gravis type in all cases.

Of the children in the billet, one had had diphtheria some time before and the remainder had not been immunised, apparently owing to the refusal of the parents.

4 cases of diphtheria occurred in a hostel in the Maidstone Rural District. None of these children had been immunised. The infection was introduced by one of them with ear discharge.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

	Tenterden Borough		Cranbrook R.D.		Maidstone R.D.		Tenterden R.D.	
Ages	1-5	5-15	1-5	5-15	1-5	5-15	1-5	5-15
Immunised in 1942	59	5	174	212	206	84	65	16
Previously	101	326	200	1,066	374	1,469	145	622
<u>Total</u>	160	331	374	1,278	580	1,553	210	638
Percentage immunised	84	70	49	67	67	72	64	81
Percentage immunised 1 - 15	74		62		70		77	

27 cases of diphtheria (10 of these bacteriological only) occurred in children under the age of 15. Two of these had been immunised; there was one fatal case among the non-immunised.

TUBERCULOSIS.

	NEW CASES					DEATHS					RECOVERED		
	Pulmon-ary		Non-Pulmon-ary		Total	Pulmon-ary		Non-Pulmon-ary		Total	P	NP	T
	M	F	M	F		M	F	M	F				
Tenterden Boro'	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cranbrook R.D.	5	4	4	3	16	5	2	-	1	8	-	1	1
Maidstone R.D.	8	6	3	5	20*	7	2*	-	1	10	-	6	6
Tenterden R.D.	2	4	1	-	7	-	2	-	-	2	1	1	2
	15	16	8	8		12	6	-	2		2	8	
	31		16		45*	18		2		20			10

* In the Maidstone Rural District 2 cases were both pulmonary and non pulmonary. 1 death - # was of a case not notified.

o Tenterden Rural District - one of these was also non-pulmonary.

Cranbrook R.D. and Maidstone R.D. show a slight increase and Tenterden R.D. a decrease compared with 1941.

The figures for civilians for the three previous years were:-

	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Total
1939	36	12	48
1940	22	7	29
1941	32	12	42

Non civilian cases were notified as follows:-

Tenterden Borough	- 1	) pulmonary.
Cranbrook R.D.	- 5	
Maidstone R.D.	- 3	
Tenterden R.D.	- 1	non-pulmonary.

EVACUATION.

During 1942 there was a further considerable return of evacuees to their homes. The Sick Bay was in use from time to time, more especially following an outbreak of diphtheria in a private billet when convalescents were admitted after discharge from hospital free of infection.

CIVIL DEFENCE.

Exercises were held in both Maidstone Rural District and the Tenterden and Cranbrook Joint A.R.P. areas. The personnel are almost all voluntary and part time.

Teams took part in the Regional Competition and, though not finally successful, showed keenness and efficiency.

INSPECTION BY SANITARY INSPECTORS

	Tenterden Borough			Cranbrook R.D.			Maidstone R.D.			Tenterden R.D.		
	Numbers	Visits	Defects	Numbers	Visits	Defects	Numbers	Visits	Defects	Numbers	Visits	Defects
Bakehouses	3	12	1	18	25	2	14	32	4	9	10	1
Dairies	35	110	2	147	411	20	106	220	35	184	136	45
Slaughter-houses Registered	2	Suspended	-	-	-	-	4	116	-	-	-	-
Licenced				12	65	-	14		-	5	8	-
Other Food Pre- paring Places	-	-	-	37	14	-	30	40	4	-	-	-
Factories	-	-	-	(	)		( 87	30)	5	2	6)	
Workshops and				(80	51)	2	(	)		2	10)	1
Work places				(	)		(	)		6	12)	

Nuisances and Defects remedied (other than above)

	Numbers			
	Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R.D.
Overcrowding	1	1	15	-
Keeping of Animals	-	-	8	1
Hop-pickers Camp	1	20	20	9
Sanitary Accommodation - insufficient defective	- 4	- 4	8 24	2 98
Drainage - reconstructed	-	2	18	1
- repaired	6	12	15	8
- cleansed	-	96	791	33
Cesspools - abolished	-	1	12	-
- repaired	1	12	17	4
Offensive Accumulations	-	4	22	-
Refuse Receptacles	-	20	10	-
Tents, Vans and Sheds	-	2	4	-
Yard Paving	-	-	14	11
Dampness	2	5	20	15
Roofs & Rainwater Pipes	3	9	20	29
Floors	1	5	12	8
Walls and Ceilings	-	10	31	24
Windows & Ventilation	-	3	10	17
Baths, Lavatory Basins & Sinks	-	2	16	13
Water Supplies	-	17	20	51
Miscellaneous	10	40	20	14

FOOD CONDEMNED DURING THE YEAR

Tenterden Borough	Cranbrook R.D.	Maidstone R.D.	Tenterden R.D.
Tons. cwts.	Tons. Cwts. Qts. lbs.	Qts. lbs.	cwts. qts. lbs.
1 -	1 1 - 12 *	3 26	1 3 6

The amount of meat condemned in the Cranbrook district was from a total of 37 beasts, 39 calves, 202 sheep, 23 pigs slaughtered, all of which were inspected.* This included the entire carcasses and offal of two cows.

Figures for the other three districts are not available.

TOTAL INSPECTIONS by the SANITARY INSPECTORS.

264	2,094	2,098	997
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A large amount of the Sanitary Inspectors' attention is given to work directly or indirectly connected with the War. In the Maidstone Rural District, 75% of the Assistant Inspector's time is devoted to Civil Defence duties.

Their work has been hampered from time to time by insufficient petrol for transport.

